

# Clear Springs Wilderness Quest

## Quest Description:

Welcome Explorers to the Clear Springs Wilderness Quest! Clear springs flow into Hutchins Creek, which separates this area from Bald Knob Wilderness to the east. This ever-flowing creek, deciduous forest, and limestone bluffs are home to animals such as wild turkey, deer, and a variety of small mammals.

As you begin your walk on the trail, notice the uprooted and downed trees left over from storms such as the 2009 Super Derecho and other extreme weather events that have passed through in recent years. Although it may be aesthetically unpleasing to see this disturbance in nature, the landscape has begun a slow recovery. Natural forces like these can be beneficial to some species habitats - the Eastern Woodrat is a state endangered mammal that builds stick shelters like the one in picture below. It is a pack rat, as they are known to stash items such as bottle tops, shotgun shells or other items they find.

In the interest of health and safety the trails are cleared for access to the wilderness while protecting the resource and supporting and maintaining wilderness values. Since the Wilderness Act of 1964 prohibits individuals from using any wheeled or mechanized devices, the Forest Service uses traditional tools, like cross cut and hand saws, axes and shovels to clear, build and maintain trails in wilderness areas across the forest.

In the areas where trees have been cleared off of the trails, look for areas that would be good shelter for woodrats and sketch or photograph it. Or build your own stick shelter with debris you find along the trail. Sketch or photograph your masterpiece then dismantle it to leave the area as you found it.



**Trail Name and Marker:** Godwin Trailhead (West)

**Trail Difficulty:** Moderate to Difficult

**Trail Length:** 1 mile round trip

**Travel Time:** 1/2 hour

**Trail Type:** Dirt & rock trail

**Best Season:** Winter, Spring, Fall

**Possible Hazards:** Poison ivy, poisonous snakes, ticks and thorns.

**Wilderness Ethics:** Check for "hitchhiker" seeds, Plan ahead and prepare for your trip, Leave what you find, Pack in/pack out, Respect wildlife and other visitors.

## Directions to Godwin Trailhead:

From Route 3, take Muddy Levee Road east approximately 2 miles. Turn left at base of bluff when road ends – take the first right and begin ascent onto top of bluff. Trailhead will be on the left side (east of road) where there is a small pull off and trailhead sign.

## Supplies Needed:

1. Map
2. Snack
3. Water
4. Journal
5. Pencil

## In Case of Emergency: 911

Union County Hospital  
517 N Main St.  
Anna, IL 62906  
(618) 833-4511

## For More information:

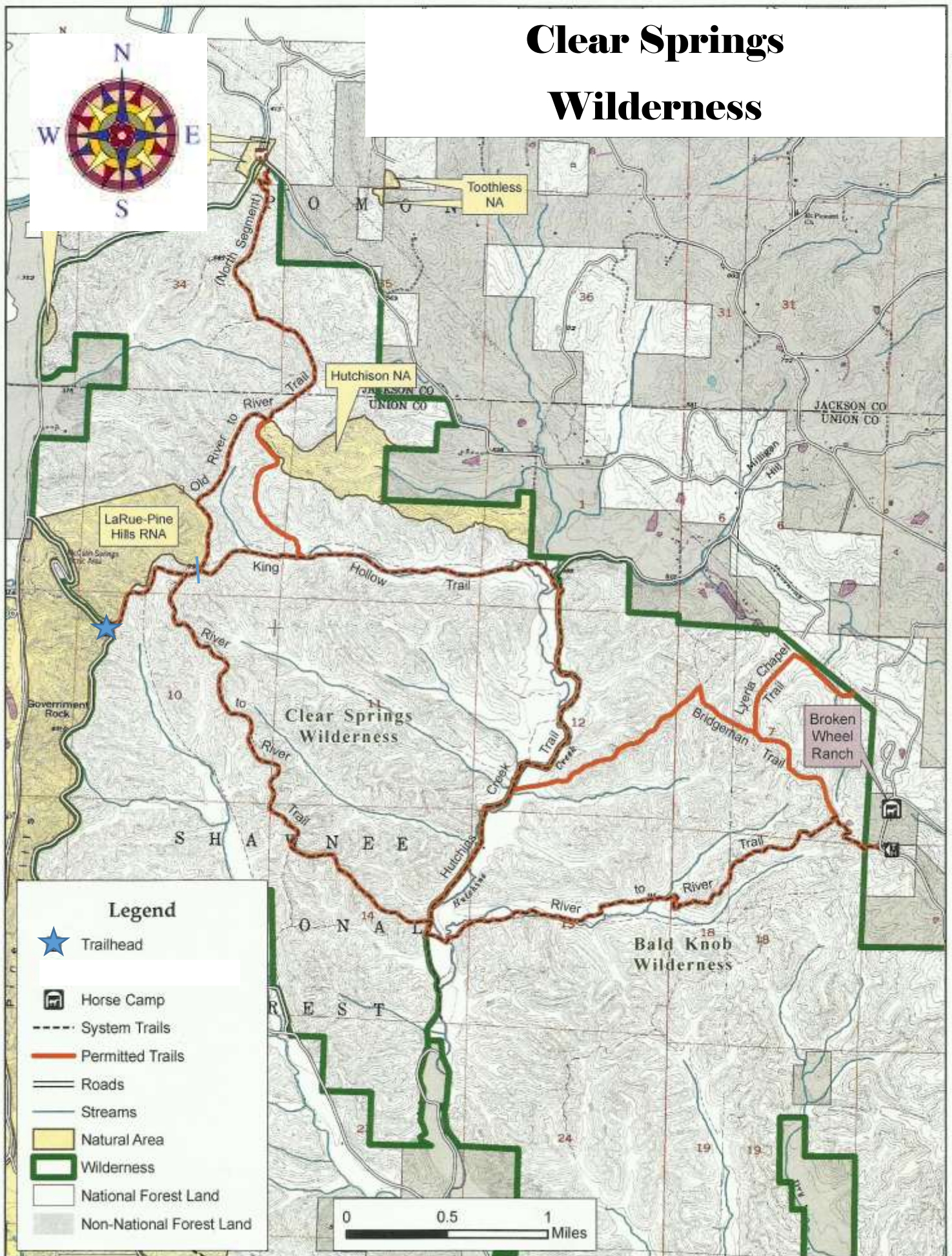
Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District  
521 North Main  
Jonesboro, IL 62952  
[www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee](http://www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee)



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## Legend



Trailhead



Horse Camp

----- System Trails

— Permitted Trails

— Roads

— Streams

Yellow box Natural Area

Green box Wilderness

White box National Forest Land

Gray box Non-National Forest Land

0 0.5 1 Miles